

Moran Works to Improve Guard and Reserve Retirement Benefits

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Congressman Jerry Moran this week insisted House leadership lower the retirement age for National Guard and Reserve members who have served at least 20 years. Moran led more than 75 of his colleagues in asking the House Armed Services Committee to include a Senate-approved provision in the 2008 Defense Authorization bill, H.R. 1585, that is now being negotiated.

"Modernizing the retirement system is the number one benefits issue on the minds of our Guardsmen and Reservists," Moran and his colleagues stated in the letter to the Armed Services Committee. "The role of the National Guard and Reserve has been transformed to play a central part in national defense. The greater requirements for sacrifice and service placed on the Guard and Reserve must be matched with greater commitment to them on our part."

Though close to 500,000 members of the Guard and Reserve have been called up since September 11, their benefits do not always match their increased service. Unlike active duty forces that may receive retirement pay immediately upon completion of 20 years of service, Guard and Reserve members must wait until age 60. Many also lose the ability to contribute to civilian retirement plans while serving on active duty. The provision Moran supports will reduce the age for receipt of retirement pay by three months for every 90 days a Guard or Reserve member spends on active duty after September 11, 2001, enabling members to retire as early as age 50. This change would help fix the inequality and encourage the recruitment and retention of National Guard and Reserve members.

Moran is a senior member of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

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